

Michelle D. Blount906 Manhattan Drive
Columbia, Missouri 65201

January 17, 2002

Renata Hesse
Trial Attorney
Antitrust Division
Department of Justice
601 D. Street NW, Suite 120
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Ms. Hesse:

As a technology management person for a large insurance company, I frequently deal with issues related to computer hardware and software. In addition to my professional involvement with computer technology, and perhaps more important, is my interest as a general consumer being represented by the Justice Department. Due to my involvement with technology, I've followed with interest the Microsoft settlement and am compelled to express my opinion on this issue.

Keeping in mind the basic foundation for this lawsuit, which was for the protection of the average consumer, it is my opinion that to accomplish this there must be a quick resolution of the matter. This settlement has been far from expedient and has been very costly. The lawsuit has clogged up our federal legal system and it is time to agree to a settlement for the benefit of all.

Again, keeping in mind the well-being of consumers, would it not be to the benefit of all for our school systems to receive free computer systems from Microsoft? While I have considered a competitor's opposition to this, their position is ancillary to the issue. The lawsuit was brought on my behalf, not to the benefit of companies that in some cases created their own failures by their own limited technology. Further, to consider a break-up of a company such as Microsoft would not be to any consumers benefit. A break-up of the company would be costly, confusing, and would ultimately harm the consumers.

To act on my behalf, the Justice Department needs to resolve this issue immediately, agreeing to a settlement that benefits those it claims to have in it's best interest. This would be to put the rewards of the settlement back into the hands of the consumers via the education of our children.

Sincerely,

Michelle D. Blount
Manager - Technical Support Services